IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended). A method of storing information configured to be used for a plurality of communication protocols to access a monitored device by a monitoring computer among distinct devices communicatively coupled to a network, comprising:

retrieving by the monitoring computer, from a first memory external to the monitoring computer and different than the monitored device, information for accessing the monitored device using at least one communication protocol supported by the monitored device, wherein the first memory is organized according to the plurality of communication protocols, and the plurality of communication protocols are associated with corresponding information for accessing the monitored device;

storing by the monitoring computer, in a second memory, the information for accessing the monitored device retrieved from the first memory;

selecting by the monitoring computer a communication protocol among the plurality of communication protocols to be used by the monitoring computer to access the monitored device based on status information that may be obtained by each of the plurality of communication protocols, the monitored device being configured to process two or more of the plurality of communication protocols useable by the monitoring computer to access the monitored device; and

directly accessing the monitored device using the selected communication protocol and the information retrieved from the first memory and stored in the second memory by the monitoring computer.

2. (Canceled).

2

3. (Original). The method of claim 1, wherein the selecting step comprises: selecting a communication protocol among SNMP, HTTP, and FTP.

4. (Previously Presented). The method of claim 1, wherein the retrieving step comprises: retrieving, from the first memory, at least one of a username and a password for accessing the monitored device using FTP.

5. (Previously Presented). The method of claim 1, wherein the retrieving step comprises: retrieving, from the first memory, at least one of a community name and a password for accessing the monitored device using SNMP.

6. (Previously Presented). The method of claim 1, wherein the retrieving step comprises: retrieving, from the first memory, an IP address of the monitored device.

7. (Original). The method of claim 1, wherein the second memory comprises a vector of parameter name and parameter value pairs for each of the plurality of communication protocols.

8. (Previously Presented). The method of claim 1, wherein the storing step comprises: storing the information for accessing the monitored device in a device software object associated with the monitored device.

9. (Previously Presented). The method of claim 8, wherein the device software object is stored in a random-access memory unit of the monitoring computer.

10. (Original). The method of claim 1, wherein the retrieving step comprises:

accessing the first memory using virtual functions associated with an abstract software class.

11. (Previously Presented). The method of claim 1, wherein the accessing step

comprises: transmitting to the monitored device, information stored in the second memory

necessary to access the monitored device using the selected communication protocol.

12. (Previously Presented). The method of claim 11, wherein the accessing step

comprises: receiving, by the monitored device, the transmitted information; and processing,

by the monitored device, the received information.

13. (Currently Amended). A system for storing information configured to be used for

a plurality of communication protocols to access a monitored device by a monitoring

computer among distinct devices communicatively coupled to a network, comprising:

means for retrieving, from a first memory external to the monitoring computer and

different than the monitored device, information for accessing the monitored device using at

least one communication protocol supported by the monitored device, wherein the first

memory is organized according to the plurality of communication protocols, the plurality of

communication protocols being associated with corresponding information for accessing the

monitored device, said means for retrieving being disposed in the monitoring computer;

means for storing, in a second memory, the information for accessing the monitored

device retrieved from the first memory, said means for storing being disposed in the

monitoring computer;

means for selecting a communication protocol among the plurality of communication

protocols to be used by the monitoring computer to access the monitored device based on

status information that may be obtained by each of the plurality of communication protocols, said means for selecting being disposed in the monitoring computer, the monitored device being configured to process two or more of the plurality of communication protocols useable by the monitoring computer to access the monitored device; and

means for accessing the monitored device using the selected communication protocol and the information retrieved from the first memory and stored in the second memory disposed in the monitoring computer.

14. (Canceled).

15. (Original). The system of claim 13, wherein the means for selecting comprises: means for selecting a communication protocol among SNMP, HTTP, and FTP.

16. (Previously Presented). The system of claim 13, wherein the means for retrieving comprises: means for retrieving, from the first memory, at least one of a username and a password for accessing the monitored device using FTP.

17. (Previously Presented). The system of claim 13, wherein the means for retrieving comprises: means for retrieving, from the first memory, at least one of a community name and a password for accessing the monitored device using SNMP.

18. (Previously Presented). The system of claim 13, wherein the means for retrieving comprises: means for retrieving, from the first memory, an IP address of the monitored device.

19. (Original). The system of claim 13, wherein the second memory comprises a vector of parameter name and parameter value pairs for each of the plurality of communication protocols.

20. (Previously Presented). The system of claim 13, wherein the means for storing comprises: means for storing the information for accessing the monitored device in a device software object associated with the monitored device.

21. (Previously Presented). The system of claim 20, wherein the device software object is stored in a random-access memory unit of the monitoring computer.

22. (Original). The system of claim 13, wherein the means for retrieving comprises: means for accessing the first memory using virtual functions associated with an abstract software class.

23. (Previously Presented). The system of claim 13, wherein the means for accessing comprises: means for transmitting to the monitored device, information stored in the second memory necessary to access the monitored device using the selected communication protocol.

24. (Previously Presented). The system of claim 23, wherein the means for accessing comprises: means for receiving, by the monitored device, the transmitted information; and means for processing, by the monitored device, the received information.

25. (Currently Amended). A computer [[p]] readable storage medium encoded with instructions which when executed by a processing apparatus cause the processing apparatus to implement a method of storing information configured to be used for a plurality of communication protocols to access a monitored device by a monitoring computer among distinct devices communicatively coupled to a network, the method comprising:

retrieving by the monitoring computer, from a first memory external to the monitoring computer and different from the monitored device, information for accessing the monitored device using at least one communication protocol supported by the monitored device, wherein the first memory is organized according to the plurality of communication protocols, and the plurality of communication protocols are associated with corresponding information for accessing the monitored device;

storing by the monitoring computer, in a second memory, the information for accessing the monitored device retrieved from the first memory;

selecting by the monitoring computer a communication protocol among the plurality of communication protocols to be used by the monitoring computer to access the monitored device based on status information that may be obtained by each of the plurality of communication protocols, the monitored device being configured to process two or more of the plurality of communication protocols useable by the monitoring computer to access the monitored device; and

accessing the monitored device using the selected communication protocol and the information retrieved from the first memory and stored in the second memory by the monitoring computer.

26. (Canceled).

7

27. (Previously Presented). The computer readable storage medium of claim 25, wherein the selecting comprises: selecting a communication protocol among SNMP, HTTP, and FTP.

28. (Currently Amended). The computer readable storage medium of claim 25, wherein the retrieving comprises: ~~instructions for~~ retrieving, from the first memory, at least one of a username and a password for accessing the monitored device using FTP.

29. (Previously Presented). The computer readable storage medium of claim 25, wherein the retrieving comprises: retrieving, from the first memory, at least one of a community name and a password for accessing the monitored device using SNMP.

30. (Previously Presented). The computer readable storage medium of claim 25, wherein the retrieving comprises: retrieving, from the first memory, an IP address of the monitored device.

31. (Previously Presented). The computer readable storage medium of claim 25, wherein the storing comprises: storing, in the second memory, a vector of parameter name and parameter value pairs for each of the plurality of communication protocols.

32. (Previously Presented). The computer readable storage medium of claim 25, wherein the storing comprises: storing the information for accessing the monitored device in a device software object associated with the monitored device.

33. (Previously Presented). The computer readable storage medium of claim 32, wherein the method further comprises: storing the device software object in a random-access memory unit of the monitoring computer.

34. (Previously Presented). The computer readable storage medium of claim 25, wherein the retrieving comprises: accessing the first memory using virtual functions associated with an abstract software class.

35. (Previously Presented). The computer readable storage medium of claim 25, wherein the accessing comprises: transmitting to the monitored device, information stored in the second memory necessary to access the monitored device using the selected communication protocol.

36. (Previously Presented). The computer readable storage medium of claim 35, wherein the accessing comprises: receiving, by the monitored device, the transmitted information; and processing, by the monitored device, the received information.